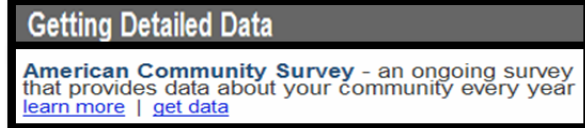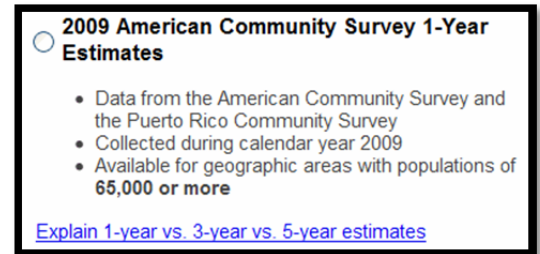# Quick Guide to American FactFinder and American Community Survey Data

1. Start at www.census.gov

2. From the blue navigation bar on the left of the screen, click on "American FactFinder"

3. On the next page, click on "Legacy American Factfinder", on the right side of the page.

4. Under the gray box which reads "Getting Detailed Data", scroll down to "American Community Survey" and click on "get data".

5. The next step is to choose your data set. You can choose from 5-year, 3-year and 1 year estimates by selecting the small round button to the left of each. There are also links which explain the differences between the data sets.

6. Once you've chosen your data set, you'll see a list of data products to choose from immediately to the right of your choice (Please note- not all data products are available for each data set). For more information on which data product is right for you, please see the Data Product Overview on the other side of this handout.

7. Choose your data product by clicking on it, and you'll be taken to the "Select Geography" page. Choose your geographic type (County or State, for example), then follow the on-screen instructions. Once you've identified the specific geographies you're interested in (for some products you may need to also click "add"), you'll either click on "Show Result" (for Data Profiles and Comparison Profiles), or "Next" for all other types of data products.

8. If you've chosen a data product other than Data or Comparison Profiles, you'll now need to make additional choices:

- *Selected Population Profiles*: Using the blue tabs, choose a Race, Ethnic, Ancestry or Country of Birth, then click "Show result"

- *Ranking Tables* or *Subject Tables*: Choose a table by scrolling down the page or sorting by subject

- *Detailed Tables*: Using the blue tabs, search by keyword or subject. Highlight the table(s) you're interested in, click "Add", and then "Show Result"

- *Geographic Comparison Tables*: Select a table and click "Show Result"

- *Thematic Maps*: Using the blue tabs, search by keyword or subject. Select your table, and click "Show Result"

9. Once your chosen table is open, you are able to print the page as is, or download. Click on "Print/Download" on the top navigation bar and make your choice. If downloading to Excel, choose Download file format > Microsoft Excel (.xls) and click "OK".

American Community Survey (ACS) data products

The Census Bureau releases multiple data products with ACS data. A complete listing is shown below.

All products can be accessed via the Census Website: www.census.gov. > Click on American Fact Finder on left side or type in http://factfinder.census.gov > Click on "Get Data" under American Community Survey title (left/center of screen) > Choose data year > Choose your desired Data Product from the list to the right.

Data Products	Description
Data Profiles	Provide estimates of selected demographic, social, economic and housing characteristics. The profiles come complete with the margin of error, which represents the 90-percent confidence interval.
Comparison Profiles	Use estimates from the single-year profiles to show year-to-year changes, the related percentage distributions, and whether the differences are statistically significant at the 90-percent confidence interval.
Selected Population Profiles	Allow users to view Colorado's data profiles by certain Race, Ethnic, Ancestry, and Country of Birth Groups. Not all races, ethnicities, ancestries and countries of birth will be available for Colorado or for smaller geographies within Colorado.
Ranking Tables	Show how states compare to each other for selected characteristics.
Subject Tables	Highlight a particular subject of interest. Some subject tables are based on the microdata.
Detailed Tables	Provide basic housing and population characteristics. The Detailed Tables include both the estimate and 90-percent margin of error. Some subject areas are available by race and ethnicity. "B" tables are more detailed than "C" tables, which are compressed.
Geographic Comparison Tables	Single-variable tables comparing selected characteristics for geographies other than states.
Thematic Maps	Provide graphic displays of the data available through the geographic comparison tables and ranking tables.
PUMS Data Files	Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) files allow users to create their own tabulations from a sample of the actual ACS responses. These files require the user to be proficient in a statistical package such as SAS, SPSS, Sudaan or STATA. The only geographies available on the PUMS files are state and Public Microdata Areas (PUMAs). The PUMS data are available in CSV and SAS (PC and Unix) formats.

For more information on the American Community Survey or American FactFinder, please visit the State Demography Office website at www.colorado.gov/demography or http://dola.colorado.gov/dlg/demog/acs/index.html.